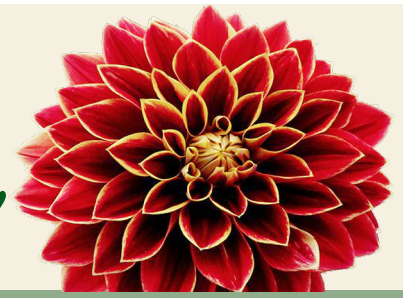




Highlands Historical Society



Spring 2023

To preserve and promote the rich heritage of Highlands

Highlands, N.C.

Climate Change...

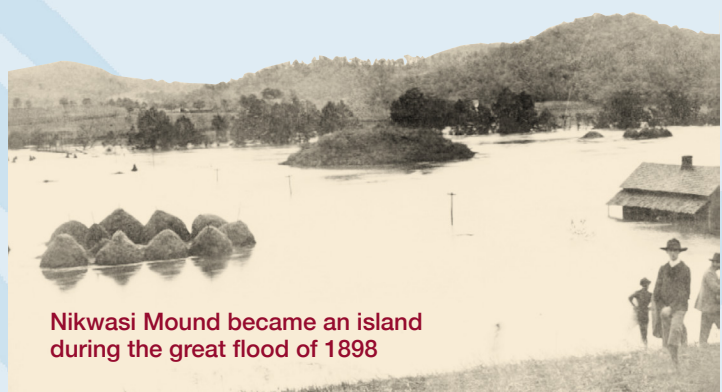
Climate refers to the long-term regional average temperature and rainfall patterns over seasons, years or decades. Since the pre-industrial period the earth's global temperature has increased 1.8°F and is currently increasing by more than .36°F per decade. Changes are driven by human activities, particularly fossil fuel burning, which increases heat-trapping greenhouse gas levels. Climate data key indicators are temperature increases, rising sea levels, ice loss at earth's poles and severity changes in extreme weather.



Skating on Mirror Lake in the 1950s

Highlands Extreme Weather

December, 1886 was the year of the most snow in a single, continuous fall. James Rideout reported he measured thirty-two inches at several locations. Prof. Harbison reported a depth of three feet of continuous fall during that same period. In March, 1942 the local newspaper reported two feet with no drifts. Highlanders found themselves virtually snowbound and incapacitated. The Blizzard of 1993 was billed as "the storm of the century" dumping sixteen inches overnight, probably a record for a single twelve hour period.

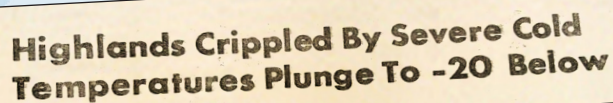


Nikwasi Mound became an island during the great flood of 1898



Courtesy of The Highlander Newspaper (March 23, 1993)

The coldest day ever recorded in Highlands was an official -20°F in January, 1966. Lows of -19°F had been recorded 1886. Speaking of temperatures the general rule is one degree decrease for each 300 feet in altitude.



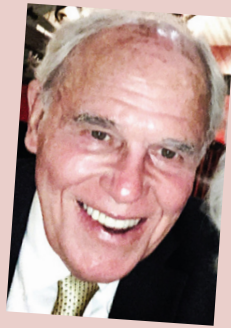
Courtesy of The Highlander Newspaper (February 3, 1966)

The driest year on record in Highlands was 1925, which saw fifty-three inches of precipitation, amounting to 60% of the average. Dry conditions at the end of the century found our water table threatened. Wells were being sunk to 1,000 feet to tap water that once flowed at half that level.

Highlands averages 87.9 inches of rain each year. In 1916 the record total rain was 120 inches, which included thirty five record inches of rain in July, also a record for a month. In the summer of 1928 during one day in August a record eight inches fell. Bridges and culverts washed out completely on every road and whole trees slid down from the mountainside. Regardless of how heavy the rain might fall, it's the price we pay for our beautiful rain forest.

continued on page 4

**President's Letter
April 2023**



We expect a great year in 2023 at Highlands Historical Society. Our museum will have exciting additions. One will be a history of Mountain Music exhibit that includes historical instruments and sound. Last year HHS had our first Heritage Day Celebration and 2023 we will expand that program. We are exploring options for a high school Highlands Historical Education day. A walk through the cemetery will be reintroduced this year. Last year our annual fund raiser, Big Hats, Bow Ties, was a fun event that was enjoyed by all that attended and we look forward to this year. We project continuing success for the Dahlia Festival. Engineers are exploring a solution for a sagging roof issue. Temporary solutions have been taken however the long term solution will be expensive and expected to be completed this year. Highlands is fortunate to have our Highlands Historical Museum and Prince House that is made possible by your generous contributions Thank you for your past support.

Harry

Harry McDonald,
President

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Renew your membership for 2023

We hope you will financially support HHS

Membership	\$100.00
Promoter	\$250.00
Preserver	\$1,000.00
Protector	\$2,500.00
Highlander	\$5,000.00

Thank you for your support you have so generously done in the past. To join or renew membership by check please mail to:

Highlands Historical Society

P.O. Box 670, Highlands, NC 28741

or via credit card online using the "donate" tab on www.highlandshistory.com

WE NEED YOUR SUPPORT!

**Dahlias! Save The Date
September 8th-10th**

The weekend of September 8th-10th downtown Highlands will once again become the backdrop for a series of vignettes displaying exquisite dahlias and native plants grown here on our mountain plateau. More details to come – but this year's festival promises to be the best yet!

Photo courtesy of
Greg Clarkson



Climate Change... continued from page 1

Coweeta Laboratory 75 Year Research Data

Air temperatures have been increasing significantly since the late 1970s. Drought severity and frequently have increased over time. Precipitation distribution has become more extreme over time.

Some valid conclusions can be drawn from data collected from 1962-2003 by meteorologists from the John Hopkins Applied Physics Laboratory. The winter temperatures have increased significantly by an average of 1.9°F. The warming trend affected only the winters, by less snow and ice than by former years when frozen Mirror Lake and Lake Sequoyah supported ice skates.

HIGHLANDS WEATHER BY MONTH

	High	Low
January	42.8°F	24.4°F
February	46.7°F	26.7°F
March	62.4°F	39.2°F
May	69.6°F	47.6°F
June	75.0°F	55.1°F
July	77.9°F	58.5°F
August	76.6°F	57.5°F
September	71.7°F	51.9°F
October	62.8°F	41.5°F
November	53.3°F	32.1°F
December	45.4°F	27.4°F



The August 1940 hurricane washed away bridges in Highlands

HIGHLANDS COMPARED TO ASHEVILLE, NC

Common thought is that Asheville would be similar to Highlands in rainfall but significantly warmer in temperature. Actually there are some similarities but not what you may think.

	Highlands	Asheville
Sunny Days	211	212
Inches of rain	80.9	43.7
Winter months temperature	46.0°F	48.5°F
Summer months temperature	77.5°F	83.5°F



Had to plow a path to get to Bryson's Gulf Station!



Snow couldn't stop folks from getting to Bill's Soda Shop

By far the most fun enjoyed by residents and visitors alike was ice skating on the lakes. Steve Potts rented ice skates to those who didn't own their own. In February 1940 Lake Sequoyah froze to a depth of fifteen inches and attracted skaters in unbelievable numbers. Cars were actually driven onto the lake. In January, 1957 several thousand visitors, mostly from South Carolina, came to skate on Mirror Lake.